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July 21, 2016

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: 
Sheryl L. Spiller, Director

**REPORT BACK ON THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES
CONTRACTS (BOARD MOTION, AGENDA ITEM NO. 18, JUNE 21, 2016)**

This memorandum provides the report on the Board action of June 21, 2016, which instructed the Director of the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) to report back to the Board in 30 days with a potential amendment to the Domestic Violence Supportive Services (DVSS) contracts to allow more flexibility regarding the 30-day limit on emergency shelter; shifting funds between service types and the provision requiring DV staff identification badges.

DPSS met with the DVSS Contractors to obtain their input regarding the issues addressed in the June 21, 2016 motion. Overall, the majority of DVSS contractors are satisfied with the current provisions of the contract. However, several agencies expressed a desire for additional flexibility with respect to:

A. Flexibility Regarding the Limitations of Emergency Shelter Funding

Pursuant to the DVSS contracts, contractors may bill for a maximum of 30 shelter nights per CalWORKs participant during a 12-month period.

Some contractors indicated that because of the limited availability of alternate domestic violence shelter funding, an extended stay of 45 nights or longer may be needed to stabilize the family and transition them to an appropriate living situation.

As a result, DPSS will amend the contracts to allow for an additional 15 shelter nights (for a total of 45 nights), for unforeseen circumstances (e.g., the family/participant is still in crisis). DPSS will also explore the potential availability of funding for longer stays.

B. Flexibility Regarding Moving Funds Between Service Types

The two service categories funded under the DVSS contracts are Case Management Services and Legal Services. Not all DVSS contractors are funded for both. Currently, those that are funded for both service categories are not permitted to move funds from one service type to the other.

The DVSS contractors expressed that flexibility to shift funds would help them to provide the type of services that are needed by the participants and enable them to maximize the use of contract funding.

To address this, DPSS will amend the contract to permit the movement of up to 10% of the funds allocated for one service type to the other with the Department's approval. This modification will provide flexibility to the contractors while ensuring that sufficient funding remains available in each Supervisorial District for both service types throughout the fiscal year.

C. Provision Regarding DV Staff Identification Badges

The current DVSS contract requires that DV staff have photo identification so that DV victims are able to quickly identify the staff.

A few contractors expressed a strong resistance to any type of identification badge, including a badge that did not include the employee's name or picture. The contractors assured the Department that the procedures they have in place to identify themselves currently protect both the DV victims and the DV agency employees.

DPSS will amend the contracts to delete the provision mandating that contractors' staff wear badges and replace it with alternative language. Contractors will be required to have written procedures to ensure that participants can identify DV agency employees and they will be required to provide such procedures to DPSS upon request.

These changes address the DV providers' concerns around the issues identified in the board motion. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me or your staff may contact Antonia Jiménez, Acting Chief Deputy, at (562) 908-8309.

SLS:tp

c: Chief Executive Officer
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors